Berkshire Mountain

Animal World

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Dakota
Columbia Greene Humane Society

QR Code inside for Benson's Pet Center, Page 2

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MAY, 2025

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Apollo would like to know – "Would you like to dance with me?" Named after the Greek God who enjoyed dance and sunlight (don't we all?), this handsome 8-month-old American pit bull terrier is an active and exuberant pup. He has bouts of "excitement overload", because he's a youngster who simply needs structure in his life. He's a highly trainable boy who is receptive to learning new things. Apollo would do best in a home with teens and older due to his mouthiness, which the kennel staff is working with him on. He would love a dog-savvy cat friend as well as a dog playmate pending a successful introduction; he finds great joy in the company of both. Apollo eats things he shouldn't, so he'll need a watchful owner to monitor his tendency. Overall, he's a lovely boy who has a lot going for him. He's looking for the perfect person to help him learn and grow! If you think you've got the dancing moves to suit this boy's energy, please contact kennel staff at Berkshire Humane Society – (413)-447-7878 ext. 126

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May 16

National Rescue Dog Day
May 20

World Turtle Day
May 23

World Parrot Day
May 31

Give your pets a hug for me!! Gayle

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Front Photo Credit: ***Pictured with CGHS/SPCA Animal Care Technician Melissa Revette is* Dakota*, an 8-year-old Husky mix who was surrendered because her previous owners didn't have enough time for her. Despite her age, she's incredibly active and playful and would benefit from a family who has time to run her. Dakota absolutely loves her squeaky toys! She's good with other dogs but a meet and greet is always required. She's never been around cats before but seemed to do well, so management would be recommended. Due to her energy level, older kids are best for her!***

SPOTLIGHT

Q & A with JAE!

Do you have a question about pet food or herbal supplements for your fur babies?

Contact us at Berkshiremountainanimalworld@gmail or aka.jae.evans@gmail.com with your concerns or questions!

Question:
How do I begin? There are so many brands and each one says they are the best. Can you help me?

Answer:
It's every brand's job to claim to be the best, so of course it's confusing. So, begin by skipping both name recognition and any claims the brand is making, such as "natural," and go directly to the ingredients panel. You don't want to see ultra-processed food on that list. If you don't know what that looks like: basically, if you couldn't possibly produce it in an ordinary household kitchen, it's ultra-processed. You also don't want unpronounceable additives, which may or may not be an ingredient a dog's body can absorb and utilize. That goes for nutritional supplementation, too. For instance, I just googled the ingredients of a popular brand of fairly upscale commercial dog food. This brand lists "L-ascorbyl-2-polyphosphate, as a source of vitamin C." Well, you know what else has vitamin C? About a million different fruits and vegetables, none of which need to be ultra-processed. Okay, next step: Check out the amount of meat and produce compared to the amount of grain. Looking at that popular brand again, its first three ingredients are rice by-product, chicken by-product meal, oats, and wheat. So we're four ingredients in, and our ratio of grains to meat is already three to one. And "chicken by-product meal" is not a food you could rustle up in your own kitchen -- I hope! In fact, I'd argue that it's debatable whether it necessarily qualifies as meat). Produce shows up in eighth place, in the ultra-processed form of dried beet pulp. Forget it! Alright, one more tip: The phrase "human-grade" means you're getting the highest possible quality.

NEWSBITE

16th Annual
Dairy Queen Benefit

• • •

for the Columbia-Greene Humane Society/SPCA
Saturday, May 10th, 2025 - 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.
At the Ghent Dairy Queen, 2319 Route 66
Shop for your Mother's Day gifts. There will be jewelry, kitchen items, floral arrangements, artwork, spring wreaths, lighthouse motif decorations, dog/cat items & more!
The shelter would like to thank the crew at Dairy Queen - Ghent for this ongoing support. This benefit has raised over $18,000 for our animals over the years!

Columbia-Greene HUMANE SOCIETY/SPCA

DQ

16th Annual Benefit for the Columbia-Greene HUMANE SOCIETY/SPCA

• Saturday, May 10th, 2025 •
10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.
At the Ghent Dairy Queen, 2319 Route 66

Shop for your Mother's Day gifts. There will be jewelry, kitchen items, floral arrangements, artwork, spring wreaths, lighthouse motif decorations, dog/cat items & more!

The shelter would like to thank the crew at DQ for this ongoing support. This benefit has raised over $18,000 for our animals.

Berkshire Humane Society
214 Barker Rd., Pittsfield, MA 01201
Phone: (413) 447-7878, Berkshirehumane.org

This super cute pair of 2-year-old male guinea pigs are **Reggie and Rocky**. Since they are a shy pair who are slowly coming out of their shell, they'll need a confidence-building home where they can thrive. With time, love and care, they will make a lovely addition to someone's home. Guinea pigs make excellent pets for those who live in smaller spaces. If you think you can provide them with the life they're seeking or you're interested in learning more about guinea pig care or adoption, please reach out to our small animal department at (413)-447-7878 ext. 124. Berkshire Humane Society currently has six guinea pigs available for adoption at this time.

Dos and Don'ts of Flea & Tick Prevention for Dogs and Cats

Stephanie Silberstang, DVM CVA

Flea and tick preventatives are highly recommended in most parts of the United States and internationally for dogs and cats. Fleas can cause local itchiness, allergies, anemia, and can transport certain diseases, including tapeworms and the bubonic plague.

Ticks are by far the scarier bug, as they can cause life-threatening diseases to dogs, including Lyme disease, Ehrlichiosis, Anaplasmosis, and Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever. Here are some Dos and Don'ts for concerned pet parents interested in safeguarding their furry friends from fleas and ticks:

The Dos:

• Use a dog or cat flea and tick preventative. Over-the-counter flea and tick preventatives can be ineffective, or, in some cases, dangerous to your pet.

• Treat your entire home if one flea is found on your dog or cat. Fleas do not live on your pet, but instead live within your home, and only attach themselves to your pet when they need a meal.

• Keep your pet on a flea and tick preventative year-round . With warmer winters and evolving species, fleas and ticks are no longer dying or hiding during winter months.

• Choose the best flea and tick preventative for your dog or cat. Topical is not the best choice for dogs that love to swim daily, and oral prevention may not be the best for pets with food allergies, since they contain flavoring. Ask your veterinarian to help you pick the best option for your pet.

The Don'ts:

• Don't give flea and tick preventative medication to your cat if it is labeled for a dog. Dog preventatives contain more than 10x the amount of medication present in the cat version, which can be toxic to cats, leading to tremors, seizures, and hyperthermia. If you give a dog preventative to your cat, seek veterinary attention immediately, since symptoms can be delayed.

• Don't give topical flea and tick preventative medicines orally or vice versa. Always double check the label of your preventative to see how it should be administered. If you have a question, check with your veterinarian.

• Don't bathe your pet within 2 days of applying topical flea and tick prevention medicine . The preventative is absorbed systemically through the skin which can take up to 48 hours. If your dog likes to swim, consider an oral or collar form of prevention.

• Don't forget to check your pet after each excursion into heavily wooded areas or known tick-infestations.

• Don't hesitate to remove a tick from your pet. A tick can be removed by grabbing the head, where it inserts into the skin, and pulling it out. Do NOT burn the tick out, as you are at risk of burning your pet. If an engorged tick is found on your pet, tick-borne disease testing should be performed by your veterinarian in 4-6 weeks.

The safest decision for your pet is to be proactive with flea/tick medications. It is easier to prevent infestations and the diseases that they may carry by preventative medication than by treating the diseases once they are present.

It is also less expensive to keep your pet on year-round preventative care than to treat the disease once they are infected. In some flea/tick diseases, extensive diagnostics, hospitalization, and treatment may be required.

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This Side of Purradise

by Iris Bass

Golden-Maned All Over

If you've a hankering for a long-haired cat, this handsome fellow may be right up your alley.

Alas, predominantly orange Maine coon Dunkin may be all too accustomed to alleys, as he was rescued as a stray and brought to Berkshire Humane Society. At eight years old (50 in human years), he's hardly old, but surely deserves to live out the rest of his days in far more comfort and security than where he was discovered.

He looks a bit ragtag now, but his long, LONG fur can be kept in gorgeous order with your gentle ministrations of fingers, comb, and brush. Stroking Dunkin softly at first to get him accustomed to your touch would be a good start, followed by the use of a soft-bristled brush once he accepts your hands and he is in a relaxed state (= doesn't run from the sight of the brush). Don't be too vigorous, or else the static could give him a light electric shock. Long hair can become matted easily, so the next step should be to accustom him to the light use of a comb, more a stroke than a tug, close to the surface at first, then gradually introduced to areas closer to his skin where mats could form, especially in warmer weather. Outright bribery with the promise of catnip or a treat only after he lets you complete a section may ensure success, also, giving him breaks between sessions/sections will allow him time to de-stress as well as learn to that grooming times are brief. If he likes music, associating a particular soothing piece with beauty time, such as a song or simple melody you could coordinate with your grooming strokes, may reassure him to relax for a brief routine that he'll learn will end in just a little while…followed by a reward if he lets you groom him to the end of the tune.

Fur aside, Dunkin has a quiet personality, best paired with a quiet, adults-only home. If you are able to include an additional cat, he's fond of another stray at the shelter, a nine-year-old (mid-50s), more outgoing, short-haired female brown tabby named Sparkles.

It is not necessary to adopt her too, but if you can find room in your home and your heart for both, you'd have the extra benefit of a discount from the shelter's Buddy Program or its Senior Discount that lowers the price for cats greater than seven years old (in kitty years). Have a hankering to make TWO cats happy? Done!

Iris Bass, coauthor of the Cat Lover's Daily Companion, shares her Lee home with two shelter cats. Please contact Berkshire Humane Society's main shelter at 214 Barker Road, Pittsfield, MA, 413-447-7878. Confirm its hours before heading over, or check out https//:berkshirehumane.org to read more about Dunkin or the other cats currently available for adoption there or at Purradise, 301 Stockbridge Road, Great Barrington, MA, 413-717-4244. Purradise is open for both adoptions and boarding. Please respect any COVID-19 protocols that may be in place at either shelter.

Caption: Dunkin. Copyright © 2025 Berkshire Humane Society

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FARM SANCTUARIES (In our region)

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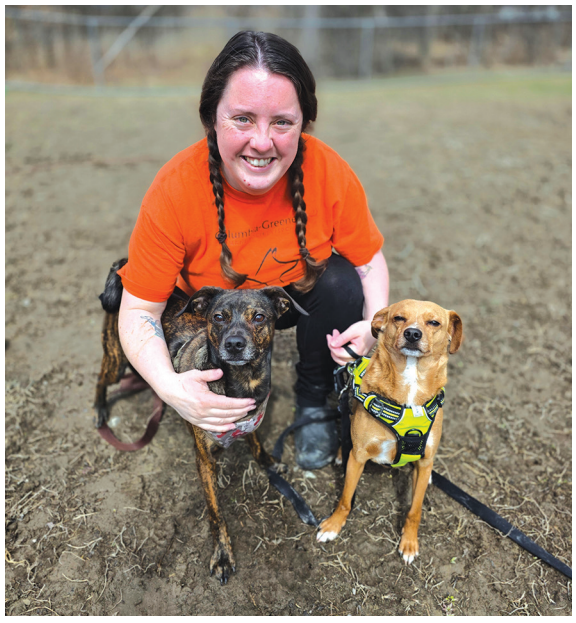
  Chathamanimalhaven@gmail.com
  http://chathamanimalhaven.org/
- **Berkshire Farm Sanctuary**
  34 West Main Rd., Peru, MA 01235
  413-344-7433
  info@berkshirefarmsanctuary.org
  https://berkshirefarmsanctuary.org
- **Farm Sanctuary**
  3150 Aikens Rd, Watkins Glen, NY 14891
  607-583-2225, experience@farmsanctuary.org
  https://www.farmsanctuary.org
- **Safe Haven Farm Sanctuary**
  254 Gardner Hollow Rd, Poughquag, NY 12570
  845-724-5138 to schedule a visit
  safehavenfarmsanctuary@gmail.com
  https://safehavenfarmsanctuary.org
- **Woodstock Farm Sanctuary**
  2 Rescue Rd, High Falls, NY 12440
  845-247-5700 info@woodstocksanctuary.org
  https://woodstocksanctuary.org/

Columbia-Greene HUMANE SOCIETY/SPCA

Pictured with CGHS/SPCA Animal Care Technician Sarah Ozmon, **Dante and Elliot** are 3½-year-old Miniature Pinscher mixes who were surrendered at no fault of their own. They've been together their whole lives and are incredibly bonded, so they must be adopted together. These boys are great with other animals and would be amazing dogs to live with kids...they need someone to help tire them out! Even though they're attached to each other, they both are very affectionate with people.



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Open daily Tuesday - Saturday 11:30 - 4
https://cghs.org/
Boarding and Daycare remain the same and the food bank is open 7 days a week.

Please call with any questions.

Berkshire Humane Society
214 Barker Rd, , Pittsfield, MA 01201
Phone: (413) 447-7878, Berkshirehumane.org

Meet **Ruby!** Although this gorgeous domestic shorthair isn't a dog, she certainly has a dog-like personality. Ruby is a laid-back 3-year-old lady looking to be the queen of the castle. Having arrived at Berkshire Humane Society from a busy household, this green-eyed beauty is hoping for a quieter home without other cats or dogs. Ruby is a very friendly and sweet girl who would do best with teens and older. She loves her people, but can become a bit shy when strangers visit. Although shy to start, once she comes out of her shell, she's truly a lovely girl who will follow you around seeking love and attention. She also enjoys finding toys and amusing herself with them! Ruby will need to be on a strict dietary regimen as she could stand to lose a few pounds in addition to requiring a urinary prescription diet. If you have the purr-fect home for the perfect girl, please speak with Berkshire Humane Society's feline staff directly. (413)-447-7878 ext. 124

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Mothers and Offspring at Equine Advocates

At Equine Advocates, we consider all our equine residents and human staff one big family. However, some of our horses are actually related, and we love knowing they're in the same safe home. In recognition of Mother's Day, we want to share their stories and some fun facts about mares and offspring.

Peggy and Melanie

Peggy, a Belgian Draft born around 1996, is a former PMU (Pregnant Mares' Urine) Mare who was part of a major rescue operation of 46 Canadian PMU mares that Equine Advocates saved in Manitoba between October 2003 and March 2004. Peggy was in foal at the time of her rescue in 2004. She arrived at the sanctuary in the spring of that year and gave birth to her daughter Melanie shortly after. Peggy has a freeze brand #157 on her side, which represents the stall number at the PMU factory farm where she came from.

The majority of foals born to PMU mares are considered byproducts, and many are sent to auction and/or slaughter. Since Melanie was born at our sanctuary, she thankfully will never experience the abuse her mother and countless other horses suffered in the name of medicine. These two beautiful mares live in the same field with two other draft horses.

Annie and Connor

Annie, born around 2001, is a Belgian Draft branded with #157, the same as Peggy. She was the youngest of the 46 Canadian PMU mares we rescued in Manitoba. For that reason, she does not seem to have as many physical and emotional scars as most of the other mares rescued during those six months. She gave birth to a colt named Connor in the spring of 2004 at our sanctuary. They were adopted out, but both horses came back to us in 2008. Annie lives in the same field as Peggy and Melanie, while Connor lives with Jeffrey Mac, a Draft Cross and fellow PMU offspring.

Facts about dams and foals

• The female parent, or mother, of a foal is referred to as a "dam."

• Mares are seasonal breeders, meaning they can be bred from late spring to early fall.

• The average gestation period for a horse is 340 days, or about 11 months. That's two more months than humans!

• Mares typically give birth to one single foal. Twin pregnancies are rare and are very risky for the dam and offspring. It's rare for both foals to survive.

• Most often, foals are born at night, and it happens very quickly. This is because in the wild, it protects the mare and foal from predators when they are at their most vulnerable.

• Foals can weigh up to 150 pounds at birth.

• When first born, foal hooves have a special covering called "fairy slippers," which develop in the womb to help protect the dam's reproductive organs and birth canal during pregnancy and birth. This covering hardens as foals start standing and walking within hours of birth.

• Colostrum, the dam's first milk, provides foals with infection-fighting antibodies. Since foals are born without a fully developed immune system, receiving the colostrum is critical for a horse's health and survival.

At Equine Advocates, we don't breed our rescued equines. We do, however, feel proud to have saved dams in foal and had many equines born under our care, ensuring they're safe from a life of abuse or mistreatment.

EQUINE ADVOCATES

Equine Advocates Rescue & Sanctuary
3212 State Route 66, Valatie, NY

2025 OPEN DAY SCHEDULE

11:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Sunday, May 4
Saturday, June 7
Saturday, July 19
Saturday, August 16
Saturday, September 13
Saturday, October 18
Sunday, November 9

Come spend a few hours walking around and meeting our horses, ponies, donkeys and mules, most of whom were rescued from abuse, neglect and/or slaughter. Also, you will have the opportunity to meet our retired veteran military horses from the Caisson Platoon at Arlington National Cemetery. All are happily enjoying their life here at the sanctuary.

We have graphics posted at each paddock so you can learn about where each animal came from and why they needed to be rescued. This helps make your visit a much more personal and educational experience!

FEEDING OUR EQUINE RESIDENTS IS NOT PERMITTED!

Please feel free to picnic at our pond and enjoy one of the most beautiful and serene spots here at the sanctuary.

Please note that all visitors will need to sign a release form upon arrival. Sorry, No pets permitted.
Admission is free, but we do ask that you please consider making a tax-deductible donation.
Also, on your visit, learn about our Equine Sponsorship and Monthly Giving Plan.

Equine Advocates is a non-profit 501(c)(3) equine protection/charitable organization founded in 1996.
Our Mission Statement is "*To rescue, protect and prevent the abuse of equines through education, investigation, rescue operations, the dissemination of information to the public and the operation of a horse sanctuary for slaughter-bound, abused and neglected equines.*"
Photos: Jake & Emma by Dana Goedewaagen. Jeffrey Mac by Michele Jacobs.

www.equineadvocates.org 518-392-0175

Columbia-Greene
HUMANE SOCIETY/SPCA

Soft Paws
By Charlene Marchand

It goes without fail that almost on a weekly basis, someone is referred to me for their dog's submissive urination problem. It's important to understand that this behavior is quite common, can begin as early as ten to twelve weeks of age (though more commonly around five or six months), affects both sexes equally, and if handled properly, will extinguish by about a year of age – let me repeat – if handled properly.

Let's define our terms. Even when housebroken, a dog can submissively urinate when the owner arrives home, is in close proximity to the dog, when the dog is approached by a stranger outside of the home, in a veterinarian's office, in a training class, or when company (even familiar extended family members) arrive for a visit. The behavior, in a pack-technical sense, is a deference behavior to a dominant pack member – an acknowledgement of respect, a gift (if you will), an act of subordination. Many dogs exhibiting this behavior will also roll over on their backs for the "boss."

Unfortunately, our instincts as humans are almost always incorrect in the handling of these undesirable behaviors. By that, I mean that the typical response is to yell or reprimand the dog in the heat of the moment – thinking that this negative reinforcement will stop the wetting. Wrong! The verbally aggressive posture taken by someone in charge will always exacerbate the gift-giving, precipitating a quicker "gift," and often, a much greater (quantity) one. The only individual in need of behavior motivation in this trigger situation is the dog's owner. The fluid, dynamic encouragement of the submission must be identified and stopped immediately. Correct responses include no eye contact upon approach, diffusing the focus of the dog to track-it, turning away from the dog once it squats, keeping your facial expression a "calming signal," and never allowing the dog to watch as you clean up the mess.

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remain the same
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https://cghs.org/

As those who train with me so well know, the offset tone of approval from the pack leader can also forestall an accident. While on this note, it is imperative to ignore or walk away from a dog who rolls over in a submissive manner. I'm not talking about a nice, relaxed, leisurely belly-rub when all's well – most of you know what I mean, and if you're not sure, connect with someone who can explain the difference to you.

Let me assure all of you that this behavior typically will not go away on its own. We need to have an understanding, united in helping our Fifi and Fido realize that the human king and queen of the household don't need these selfless liquid gifts to be given. They already have the greatest gift – the love and devotion of man's best friend.

Another APB: All dog owners should frequently check the fit of your canine's collar, especially if it is not removed on a daily basis. I've inadvertently discovered a number of too-tight "necklaces," while doing a hands-on for other reasons. A flat, round, or buckle collar, when checked at the thickest part of the dog's neck just above the tie-in to the shoulder blade, should allow comfortably for the fit of two fingers, one on top of the other. Some collars may need three. A properly fitted slip collar, be it nylon or a fine chain link, should rest open at the base of the neck, with two to three inches of play when gently tightened to fit snugly against the neck muscle. Dogs grow (puppies very quickly), dogs gain weight, and dogs that are active and athletic lay on muscle, which can all affect the proper fit and comfort of their collar.

Feel free to call us with any questions at (518) 828-6044 or visit our website at www.cghs.org. Charlene Marchand is the Chairperson of the Columbia-Greene Humane Society/SPCA Board of Directors. She may be contacted at cghsaaron@gmail.

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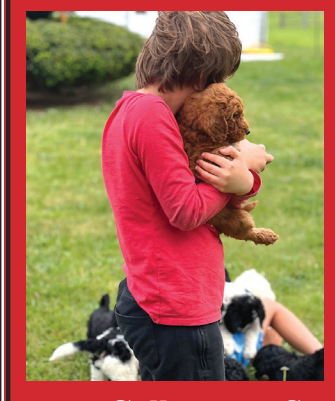

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Natural Fun Facts

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RATS

√There are more than 60 species of rats in the world. ...
√Rats' teeth never stop growing. ...
√Rats are excellent swimmers. ...
√Rats are social creatures. ...
√Rats can survive falls from great heights. ...
√Rats have poor eyesight but have a great sense of smell and hearing.

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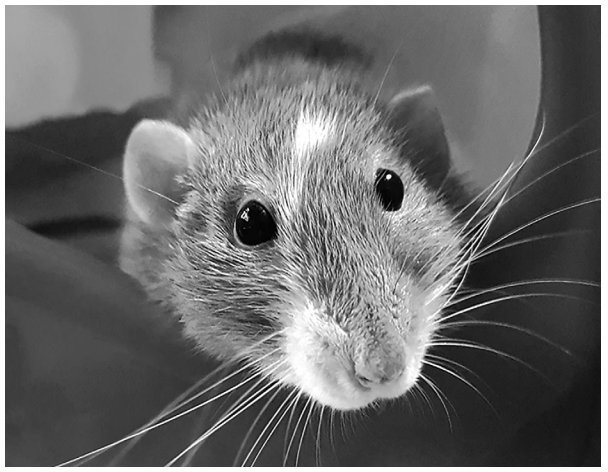
How to Care for a Pet Rat

By Lianne McLeod, DVM



Rats are smart and friendly, and they like to cuddle. They make great companion animals, including for kids. They are playful animals that desire human companionship, as well as socialization with other rats.

Rats require a moderate amount of care, but, once you get past the initial setup of the enclosure, it's fairly straightforward. Their formulated diet can be found in most pet stores. Plus, their housing doesn't take up much space and is pretty simple to maintain. Here's everything you need to know if you're considering a rat as your pet.

Species Overview

Common Name: Rat

Scientific Name: Rattus rattus

Adult Size: 14 to 18 inches (tail included)

Lifespan: 2 to 3 years

Rat Behavior and Temperament

Rats are social creatures, and most can learn to be comfortable with—and even enjoy—gentle handling by people. They recognize their owners and will even get excited to see their favorite humans. They tend to bond with whoever cares for them and socializes with them the most. So besides spending some time on their daily enclosure upkeep, daily interaction is a must.

Rats are largely nocturnal, but they can be active for periods during the day. A good time to interact with them is often in the evening hours.

To hand-tame a rat, start slowly by enticing it to explore your hands as you hold treats. Always make sure you're supporting the rat's weight when picking it up, and never squeeze it. Once a rat is comfortable with this kind of handling, it will likely want to climb on you to explore. Many rats like perching on their owners' shoulders or cuddling in their laps. And they don't typically bite unless they feel threatened.

Rats are overall quiet pets, though they do make some soft vocalizations. It's best to keep them away from other household pets to prevent undue stress and potential injuries. But they do prefer to live in pairs or small groups. A female pair can often coexist peacefully. A pair of males will sometimes become territorial but can do well if they're introduced at a young age. A female and male also can live together as long as they are spayed and/or neutered. Otherwise, you will quickly find yourself breeding lots of rats.

Size Information

Rats reach around 14 to 18 inches long on average, including the length of their tail. They weigh between roughly one-half and 1.5 pounds, with males generally being larger than females.

Housing

A powder-coated wire cage with a solid floor base is ideal for pet rats. It will allow good air circulation but still be comfortable on the rats' feet. For two rats, the minimum cage size should be 2 feet by 2 feet by 2 feet, but bigger is always better. Because rats like to climb, a multilevel cage would be suitable to give them more exercise and enrichment.

Keep the enclosure in a relatively quiet spot. And make sure it is out of drafts and direct sunlight. Stable temperatures between 60 and 80 degrees Fahrenheit are best.

Within the enclosure, provide rat toys—especially chew toys. And add a nest box. You can opt for a store-bought small animal nest, or use a small cardboard box or half of a clay flowerpot turned in its side.

Specific Substrate Needs

Place a few inches of bedding materials, such as aspen or paper pellet bedding, on the bottom of the enclosure. Avoid cedar and pine bedding, as their oils can be harmful to rats.1 You also can add some shredded paper towels or napkins for your rats to use to make a soft nest. Change the

What Do Rats Eat and Drink?

Always have fresh water available for rats. A water bottle that attaches to the side of the enclosure is ideal, as it's easy to keep sanitary. But offer a water bowl as well until you're sure the rats are using the bottle.

Use heavy ceramic food dishes, as they are difficult to gnaw and tip. Pelleted or block-type diets are typically fed as a rat's primary food. They are formulated to be nutritionally complete. Follow the feeding instructions on your chosen pet rat food, and be sure to run it by your vet. It's common to offer a day's worth of pellets in a dish, disposing of uneaten food after 24 hours before adding the next day's portion. Rats tend to graze during their waking hours.

Fresh foods can be offered to supplement the diet and prevent boredom with the pellets. Try feeding your pet rats small amounts of fruits and vegetables, whole grain pasta and bread, brown rice, and plain yogurt. Occasionally, you can offer low-fat cooked meat, mealworms, cheese, seeds, and nuts. It is important to keep rats on a high-fiber and low-fat diet.

Not all veterinarians accept rats as patients. So before even acquiring one as a pet, make sure there is a vet near you who will treat it.

Litter Training

Because rats are very smart and naturally tend to pick one spot to use as their bathroom, it is possible to litter box train them. Get a litter box made for small animals that your rat can easily get in and out of, and fill it with a different kind of litter from the main cage bedding. Place the box in the spot where your rat normally relieves itself.

It can help to put some soiled bedding in the box to show your rat that this is the spot to go. However, if the box becomes too soiled, the rat might not want to use it anymore. If your rat starts relieving itself in a different spot, move the box there or add a second box if you have the space. It should catch on fairly quickly, though not all rats will become fully litter-trained. Make sure to change the litter in the box daily.

Exercise

Rats must exercise every day not only to keep them physically fit but also to stimulate their minds. Rats love to climb and will make good use of ladders, ropes, hammocks, tunnels, and platforms in their enclosure. Some rats like to run on an exercise wheel. If you include one, make sure it has a solid surface, not wires, to prevent injury.

Besides rat toys, they also enjoy toys made for ferrets and parrots. But look for rope and wood toys, as most plastic can't stand up to the gnawing of a determined rat. Moreover, simple items like large cardboard mailing tubes, crumpled paper, paper bags, and cardboard boxes can also make wonderful homemade rat toys. Because rats are very intelligent, it's best to rotate the toys regularly to avoid boredom.

Take your rat outside of its enclosure daily as well for exercise. But be sure to rat-proof the area because rats will chew on just about anything they can reach. Keep electrical wires out of reach, and ensure your rat cannot access anything toxic.

Rats also tend to scent mark as they roam, leaving little drops of urine. The odor is not offensive, but you might want to cover furniture with a throw while they are out of the cage. They will also scent mark on their owners, so be prepared.

Grooming

Rats are very clean animals that mostly self-groom. But they might require nail trims if they don't naturally wear down their nails. Your vet can either take care of this for you or show you how to do it at home. Moreover, rats don't need water for baths. But if they happen to get some dirt or debris stuck in their fur, you can help them get it out by gently rubbing the area with a damp cloth.

Upkeep Costs

On a monthly basis, expect to spend around $20 to $40 on average for a pet rat. Your primary costs will be food and bedding. And you'll periodically have to replace chew toys and other items in the enclosure. Also, make sure to budget for routine veterinary care, as well as emergencies.

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Whether companion, comedian, confidant, or protector, our pets are always there for us. National Pet Week® celebrates this bond and encourages pet owners to be certain to provide their best friends with everything needed for a happy, healthy life.
Veterinarians, veterinary technicians, school groups, and communities host a variety of fun and informative events throughout the week.
Everyone loves their pets, but not everyone is aware of all that their pet needs to be happy and healthy long into its senior years.
AVMA's member veterinarians – experts in animal health, welfare, and behavior – invite you to take each of the essential actions highlighted during National Pet Week® that are vital to provide a lifetime of love.

Daily Themes

Each day of the week focuses on a different topic essential to responsible pet ownership:

Sunday: Choose well: Commit for life

Monday: Behavioral health: Habits for happy pets

Tuesday: Nutrition and exercise matter

Wednesday: Love your pet? See your vet!

Thursday: Travel with care

Friday: Emergencies happen: Be prepared

Saturday: Plan for their care: Give them a lifetime of love

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Dog Wags-

Breeds from A to Z

Dog of the Month

Coton de Tulear

The Coton de Tuléar is a breed of small dog named for the city of Tuléar in Madagascar. This breed is thought to have originated from a group of small white dogs that swam across the Malagasy channel following a shipwreck. Known for its white cotton-like coat, sometimes with grey, tan, black, or tri-colored markings, the Coton de Tulear stands between 9 and 11 inches high and weighing anywhere from 8 to 13 pounds.

The Coton de Tulear is a bright, robust, happy-go-lucky companion dog whose favorite activities are is to provide amusement, comfort, and companionship. The bond between Cotons and their people is so close that owners discuss it in human terms. Coton fanciers describe them as 'witty' companions 'at times boisterous but never demanding' and 'naturally clownish and lighthearted,' who possess a 'remarkably gentle, sympathetic awareness.' Amusing traits of these long-lived jesters include unique vocalizations and a knack for walking on their hind legs.

The Coton is a fairly active dog who requires a moderate amount of exercise. Daily walks with his human at a slow speed will keep him in good weight and condition. Chasing a tennis ball around his backyard can keep his mind active as well as his body. A bored and unhappy Coton can become destructive. He does best when provided with enough exercise, lots of attention from his owner, and plenty of interesting toys to keep him occupied.

Pawoscopes

Monthly Dog & Cat Pawoscope

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Taurus---April 21-May 20

DOG-Taurus is the first of the earth signs; it represents the planting of the seed. Taurus pet personalities are stalwart, earthy, practical, and stubborn. Pets born under this sign are generally strong and fond of comfort (like the most comfortable place to lie down!), love food and snacks, and like things to stay the same. While Taurus pets may be determined, they are also very protective and like to keep an eye towards the safety of their home and family. Like their human counterparts, Taurus canines can be strong-willed and don't like change. (Think twice before moving their water or food bowl.) They might also dislike exercise, but they still need it; make sure they have a regular routine. Taurus pups thrive on creature comforts in a physical environment that is quiet and safe. They have a loving disposition and are extremely loyal

CAT-Born under the fixed earth sign Taurus, your kitty is likely sweet and calm. Taureans are known to do everything on their own watch and move through life with chill ease, in part thanks to their ruling planet, beauty-loving Venus. This isn't a kitty who'll beg for hours of high-energy play. They'll be much more content dozing in the sun or happily gobbling up treats. And as a fixed (aka stubborn) sign, they're also super-attached to their favorites, so you'll want to ease them into a new wet food or wand toy when the old one goes missing.A Taurus cat is the ultimate connoisseur of comfort and luxury. Governed by Venus, the planet of love and beauty, these cats adore cozy spots and soft textures. They are likely to spend their days lounging in the sun or snuggled up in a plush bed. Taurus cats are loyal and affectionate, with a strong sense of stability and routine. They appreciate the finer things in life, from gourmet cat food to the perfect napping spot. These felines are gentle and patient, making them wonderful companions

You can sum up a Taurus in one word: cozy! Born in the spring when the ground is lush and warmed by the sun, the Taurus is sensual, earthy, and natural. They are also practical, dependable, and hardworking, with a deep love of nature and beauty.

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